I. MAGIC IN THEORY

A. Origins of the word Magic

1. Derived from the greek "Magike Techne" meaning the art of the Magi.

a. The Magi were priests of ancient Persia (Iran) who also practiced in Chaldea and Babylon.

(1) They were similar to the Druids, in that they wore white robes and favored a simple mode of life and a vegetarian diet.

(2) The Magi worshipped no idols.

(a) They chose the Divine and Sacred Fire as the symbol of their Divine Being.

(b) The Divine Fire burned in their sanctuaries and was never allowed to go out.

(c) Parallels to this exist in the practices of the Vestal Virgins in ancient Rome and the Presence Lamps that are always kept burning over the altars of some Roman Catholic churches.

2. The Greeks were unaware of any other caste of priests that practiced the magical arts so they thought the Magi were responsible for them.

a. This shows how isolated and ill-informed the ancient peoples were of their own world.

(1) The Egyptians had quite a formidable magical system based on the Egyptian Book of the Dead many years before the Magi appeared in Persia. There is also a Tibetan Book of the Dead, which details a magical system derived from Tibetan funeral rites.

3. The Greeks may have gained their root word for magic from the Indo-European root word MAGH (meaning to be able, to have the power to act.)

4. Aleister Crowley started the custom of spelling magic as MAGICK as he felt it would help in differentiating between the illusions that are the stock in trade of stage magicians and real magic as practiced by serious students of the occult.

B. Working Definition of Magic

1. The ability to recognize and understand the underlying forces of nature and the laws which govern them.

a. Starhawk pares this down to the ability to change consciousness at will.

(1) To someone who understands these laws, magic is a very natural part of the Universe.

(a) People who do not understand these laws or who refuse to recognize them, see magic as a supernatural act performed against God and therefore unnatural.

C. Foundation of Magical Theory

1. All of magical theory is based on the development of the human brain and subsequent attempts to gain control over a hostile environment.

a. The single most important development in the evolution of humankind was the development and subsequent use of the cerebellum.

(1) Until humans developed a 'higher brain' they had only their 'animal brain' to guide them through life.

(a) This 'animal brain' is responsible for those functions that people sometimes call instincts, but are really functions of the autonomic nervous system.

(b) The autonomic nervous system monitors and maintains vital functions such as heartbeat, digestion, circulation, hormone production and immediate responses to dangerous situations.

(c) Recent research in Biofeedback and Cybernetics have revealed that the autonomic nervous system (known commonly as the automatic nervous system, because it takes no conscious thought to operate) is actually capable of being directly controlled by conscious thought.

b. With the development of the 'higher brain', early humanity was able to see the world as an integrated whole in which they played an independent role.

(1) The development of this 'higher brain' led to self-consciousness and started us on the road to questioning how our world worked and how we could gain control of our environment.

(2) The subsequent development of the cerebrum into two specialized organs interconnected so that they could work independently or co-operatively as needed, led to the ability to examine the world from two different viewpoints.

(a) The right half of the brain enabled humankind to form holistic concepts of the interactions of the forces of nature in a dynamic way.

(b) The left half of the brain allowed the development of verbal skills which ensured the transmission of knowledge learned through trial and error and thus gave humanity the peculiar ability to

learn without the need to directly experience.

I. MAGIC IN PRACTICE.

A. The early magical systems were based on the observation that all of reality is based on the interaction of various natural forces.

1. The two basic magical powers that are taught to all humans as their birthright are the ability to embody complex concepts in symbolic words and to divide the world into 'pieces' so that they can examine it for short periods of time as though it were caught in a 'freeze frame.'

a. We dismiss the ability to embody complex concepts in symbolic words as being too fundamental to consider, but it is the basis for all learning.

(1) This process, which we call naming, is vital to our understanding of the world around us.

(a) By creating names that embody specific concepts, we create a vocabulary by which 'initiates' in the subject can manipulate the relationships between the different concepts to reveal new truths that lead to a better understanding of the world around us.

(2) Gaining control over something by learning its name is one of the oldest forms of magic.

(a) In the Christian Bible, God instructs Adam and Eve to name all the plants and creatures and to exercise dominion over all of them.

(b) In societies which practice magic, mothers give their children 'true names' and 'public names' to protect them from harm by someone wishing the child ill.

(c) Most people have heard the story of Rumplestiltskin, where the heroine must guess the villains name, otherwise she will be unable to stop him from carrying out his evil deeds.

(d) Or the story of the wizard who manages to summon a demon to do his bidding, only to wind up becoming a slave to the demon because he did not know the demons proper name.

b. Once humankind began to exert its influence on the world, the need to differentiate its parts and count them became very important.

(1) We differentiate the world through the use of DISCRIMINATION and this allows us to count the separate parts.

(a) Discrimination is the ability to separate an object from its shadow, trees from a forest, your child from a group of children, and your friends from your enemies.

(2) Counting took on additional significance when trading surplus food for finished goods became the basis of early commerce.

(a) The merchants needed to develop a method of keeping track of their transactions. At first they used a picture code similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics, which involved drawing a picture that represented the goods traded and which were then assigned a numerical value in accordance with how much could be traded for the goods.

(b) This was before the concept of money and allowed merchants to trade for credits of non-tangible assets.

(c) As competition grew the merchants started abbreviating the pictures of their trade goods and the symbols became the letters of the various alphabets, with the number values still attached.

(3) As astronomy and astrology were developed, the people who were learning to recognize these interactions of the forces of nature needed to record their knowledge, and they seized upon the merchants secret trade codes, or alphabets (named after the first two letters in the Phoenician script.)

(a) Because they placed great importance on the measuring of things they also adopted the numerical values of the letters as representing the numerical truth of the symbols they were using to record their new knowledge.

(b) This led to the magical system called GEMATRIA, which is based on reducing the letters of someones name, etc to a number which is assigned special sig- nificance.

c. Gematria was especially popular with biblical scholars. In the thirteenth chapter of Revelations in the Christian Bible, a beast "comes up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns and ten crowns, and on its heads the name of blasphemy". One of the heads had been 'wounded to death', but the wound had healed. "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred, threescore and six."

(1) It is generally accepted now that the Beast was meant to stand for the Roman Empire and its seven heads for the seven Emperors.

(a) The head which was wounded to death but healed, looks like an oblique reference to Nero, who took great delight in persecuting the new Christian faith and its followers, one of the more well known of which was letting them fight lions bare handed in the Coliseum. He was murdered in 68 AD, but there were persistent rumors that he had risen again and had escaped to the East, and would soon return with an army to take his revenge.

d. Aleister Crowley adopted the name of The Great Beast which, when reduced from greek into numbers using gematria, equals 666. He did this partly to shock the good people of the late Victorian era and partly as an exercise in imitative magic.

e. Another story told of the importance placed on the interpretation of the Christian Bible through gematria involves the same chapter of Revelations and the Social Security Administration in the United States of America.

(1) In chapter 13:16-17, the author speaks of a second beast which comes after the first. 'Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to marked on the right hand or the forehead,' 'so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.'

(2) These verses were quoted over and over from pulpits in the United States when it was announced that everyone was to be issued a Social Security number for purposes of identification, and that all government files would require the populace to submit their Social Security number along with their name, to be sure they were properly identified.

(a) The citizens, whipped into a fury by the clergy, deluged their Congressmen with letters of protest.

(b) The Congressmen, being pragmatists, came upon a plan to soothe the savage breasts of their constituents and still get their own way.

(c) They made it a part of the Social Security Act that the number was not to be used as identification for any purpose other than for Social Security. This is why all Social Security cards bear the legend "Not to be used for Identification."

(d) Many years later, around 1973, this was set aside when Military Service numbers were abandoned in favor of using Social Security numbers to identify military service personnel.

(e) Even today the Social Security card is not generally accepted as identification, not because of the original objection, but because it does not have a photo of the bearer.

2. The ancients, in seeking to bring order and under- standing to their world, developed the concept of the Elementals.

a. They recognized that everything was the result of the interaction of four great natural forces.

b. These Elementals were not seen as what the world was made of, like todays' elements in chemistry, but a shorthand way of explaining the way things interacted.

c. After a while the process of visualizing the Elementals as personifications of the natural forces produced thoughtforms which were able to act independently of their creators.

(1) The major force that exhibited the principle of motion was

ascribed to the Element of Air.

(a) In visualizing airy beings the race of Sylphs were actualized on our planet. These creatures had wings of gossamer, with very slight and tiny bodies, their facial features were made up of sharp planes and they tended to very short attention spans, and this usually left them in very good spirits because it was not their nature to brood. Childhood stories retain a racial memory of the Sylphs in our present day Fairies, much as Walt Disney drew Tinkerbell.

(2) When the natural attribute of a force was expansion it was said to have a Fiery nature.

(a) The Elemental creatures of Fire were the Salamanders. These creatures loved to play in the warm ashes of fireplaces and their skin glowed with alternating colors just like a hot piece of charcoal.They were quick to take offense and could carelessly allow a fire outside of the fireplace, if the family they chose to live with allowed the ashes to get too cold for them to be comfortable. With our present dependence on natural gas and electricity to provide our heat, we have lost touch with the fire Elementals, but the big brothers of the Salamanders were dragons, which possessed the airy quality of flight, the fiery quality of being able to exhale fire and the earthy quality of being fascinated by bright jewels and glittering gold.

(3) The natural force of contraction was assigned to the Elemental of Water.

(a) The race of water Elementals were called Undines after the undulating property of water, which rises and falls in synchronization with the movements of the Moon. The Undines were thought to be related to the Sylphs but of a stouter character. They were slow to anger and slow to soothe, and steadfast unless stirred up by the Sylphs.

(4) The epitome of the solid earthiness the last Elemental was the Gnome and his burrowing cousin the Dwarf.

(a) Gnomes and Dwarves were as big hearted as they were diminutive, but they did not take kindly to anyone who harmed the earth. The forest was the natural habitat of Gnomes and they knew all the secrets of each bud, leaf, root, and tree. The Dwarves lived inside the earth and mined the treasures that were uncovered by dint of their delving. Skill in metalsmithing developed alongside their shrewd sense of trading and woe to the person who got between a Dwarf and his treasure or bested him in a deal.

d. In the early stages of humanity's development, the personifications of the Elementals lived on the fringes of human settlements, and developed their own societies and kingdoms.

(1) But as humans started to infringe upon their domains and closed themselves off to seeing the Elementals, they in turn withdrew into the higher planes.

(a) Since they were originally expressions of natural forces on earth, they are bound to it and serve as caretakers for the earth until humankind is wise enough to care for it without their help.

(b) Because they were actualized on this plane by the strength of human thought, they owe a debt of brotherhood to the human race and will appear and help those humans who learn how to summon them.

3. Confronting the twin mysteries of Birth and Death, early humanity was forced to consider the existence of a Supreme Being responsible for these Mysteries.

a. Why some societies chose to see these forces as warring or opposite, while others chose to view them as mutually beneficial or complementary, we can only guess.

(1) What we can be sure of is that a lot of their rituals and magical acts were motivated by their particular world view.

(a) The body of accepted rituals and magical acts were codified and served as the basis of the religion which would grow up to explain how the world began, how someone was supposed to act while in it, and what happened after s/he died.

4. Imitative and Sympathetic Magic evolved as a means of influencing the world around the Ancients.

a. These two forms of magic were based on the principles of mimicry, contagion, and the belief that man is a microcosm of the macrocosm.

(1) Imitative magic is the general category which covers magic performed on a model,doll or actor representing the real world counterpart, which is to be affected.

(a) Examples of this type of magic would be cave drawings depicting successful hunts, love poppets and Voodoo dolls, and the survival of ancient folk dances wherethe dancer dons the skin and horns of an animal while the other dancers act out the stalking and killing of the "sacrifice."

(b) Mimicry of a real life situation, while utilizing parts of the subject to form a bond is the basis for imitative magic.

(c) Underlying imitative magic is the Theory of Contagion, which holds that parts of a living being contain the essence of its life, even after being separated. In simple terms, a magical link exists between ourselves and our parts.

(d) American Indians and Orientals did not want their pictures taken, for fear of losing their spirits inside of the camera.

(e) Many of the Grimoires from the Middle-ages warn against allowing nail clippings, locks of hair, or old articles of clothing to fall in the hands of your enemies for fear of the harm your enemies could bring against you by harming them.

(f) As a side note, the dancers in the mummers plays took great care to ensure that the skins and horns of the animals that were used in their dances were taken from male animals, this ensured that the females were left to breed and produce new game for the future.

(2) Sympathetic magic is based on the belief that man is a miniature reproduction of the universe, that he is the microcosm to the universes macrocosm.

(a) This is based on the drawing of analogies between two like beings.

(b) Many of the important magical analogies are not natural to most peoples minds today, but have been handed down by tradition from the remote past.

(c) Salt is used to ward off demons. All demons are supposed to detest it and no salt should be used in ceremonies designed to attract them. Salt is anti-demonic because it is a preservative. Since demons are creatures that corrupt and destroy, anything that has a preservative quality is contrary to their nature and is disagreeable to them.

5. Attempts to group observations into a codified system of relationships resulted in the development of the many Tables of Correspondences, which have been handed down through the ages and serve as source documents for creating new rituals.

a. These tables usually ascribe variously corresponding items to one of the old Astrological Planets.

(1) Each planet is ruled by a Goddess or a God from the local pantheon and has its own number, color, musical note, metal, gem stone, hour of the day, herbs and flowers, and attributes.

I. WESTERN TRADITIONS OF CEREMONIAL MAGIC

A. Hermetic Magic

1. This is the main tradition of the West and has been championed by many secret societies such as the Freemasons, Golden Dawn Society, and the Builders of Adytum.

a. Franz Bardon has written three volumes of instructions for aspiring Hermetic Magicians.

2. What we know of Hermetic Magic dates from the first century AD.

a. Hermetic Magic is a mixture of traditions. It combines Egyptian knowledge with ideas of the Greeks and Jews who lived in Egypt, principally in Alexandria, at the time of Jesus.

b. These three groups all claimed that the knowledge they held in common was divinely inspired. There are two different accounts of how the knowledge had been received.

(1) The first account derives from the apocryphal Book of Enoch.

(a) In a passage that amplifies Genesis 6:1-5, Enoch tells how 200 angel descended from heaven to Mount Hermon and took wives from the "daughters of man."

(b) The angels taught their knowledge to these women and to the children they bore. For this presumption, the angels were thrown out of heaven.

(c) Hermetic scholars recognize in this account a parallel to the myth of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

(d) In the Gnostic interpretation of Adam and Eve's fall, Jehovah is not The Deity, but a powerful though lesser spirit, who built the material world and rules over it.

(e) Because of his jealousy and pride Jehovah forbade knowledge to Adam and Eve hoping they would worship him as the Highest God.

(f) The serpent, in this interpretation, is not Satan, but the spirit Ouroboros, sent by Wisdom (Sophia) to liberate the minds of men and women.

(g) Magical knowledge is thus seen to be a higher and more pious wisdom than obedience to Jehovah and the serpent Ouroboros, far from being humankinds enemy, is seen as one of its greatest saviours.

(2) In a second account, magical knowledge came from Hermes Trismegistus (Thrice Great Hermes) who has given his name to the magical sciences.

(a) Hermes was a god of Greek settlers in Egypt, and was also identified with the Egyptian God Thoth.

(b) Through the agency of an ancient Egyptian king, this god gave humankind 42 books of knowledge, of which 14 short fragments, in Greek, survive.

(c) The most important of these is the Emerald Tablet.

(d) What we derive from Hermes above all is the Doctrine of Correspondence: "That which is above is like that which is below."

(e) In other words, each man and woman is a small model of the cosmos. Each mind is a model of the Divine mind.

(f) The four material elements - water, earth, wind and fire - are models of the four universal principles.

(g) The Ptolemaic scheme of the solar system is a model of the system of the astral spheres.

(h) The Doctrine of Correspondence is essential to magic, and to all occult studies.

c. From Hermetic Tradition we derive not only Ceremonial Magic, but also Alchemy.

(1) Magicians have usually practiced both sciences; and both are said to have been taught by the angels of the Book of Enoch and by Hermes Trismegistus.

(a) The difference between them is that, in alchemy, the magician tries to bring about a special physical manifestation of ether. This is the Philosophers Stone, the prima materia. With it the Alchemist can transmute base metals into gold, which is the highest material form.

(b) The Ceremonial Magician on the other hand, manipulates the ether to call upon spirits and to learn from them.

(c) Obviously, these are two similar, though very different branches of one science.

B. Faustian Magic

1. Faustian magic is the evocation of demons, and it began to develop well before the 16th century when Faust lived.

a. We do not know how much Faustian magic the 16th century wizard, Dr. Johann Faust, actually practiced.

(1) There are several copies extant of a book attributed to him.

(a) Doctoris Iohannis Fausti magiae maturalis et innaturalis, printed in Passau in 1505.

b. The most significant of the magical practices advocated by these books is the use of a book of spirits or Liber Spiritum.

(1) The Liber Spiritum must be written on virgin paper.

(a) On the left hand pages are pictures of demons and on the right hand pages are oaths that those demons have taken to serve the sorcerer.

(b) Each oath is signed by the demons mark.

(c) The book must be consecrated by a priest, who says three holy masses over it.

2. The process the good doctor had to go through to evoke the demons and force them to swear oaths to him was very involved.

a. Here is a short biography of Faust.

(1) Johann Faust (ca. 1480 - ca. 1540) probably born in Swabia and was described by a contemporary as "a most filthy beast, the midden of numberless devils." He was as notorious for his homosexuality as he was for his reputed pact with Mephistopheles. When he died there was "a great noise and shaking of the house that night.....In the morning he was found dead, with his neck rung behind him; the Divell whom he served having carried his soule into Hell." Although he sold his soul for material gain, he seems to have died in poverty.

C. Enochian Magic

1. What we know of Enochian Magic comes from a book called "A True and Faithful Relation of What Passed For Many Years Between Doctor John Dee and Some Spirits", edited by Meric Casaubon and published in 1659.

a. The book is a memoir of the Welsh scholar John Dee (1527-1608), concerning the experiments he conducted with the aid of the psychic Edward Kelley (c. 1553-1595).

(1) John Dee was a mathematician and astrologer at the court of Elizabeth I of England, while Edward Kelley was a psychic; he was also probably a sorcerer and necromancer.

b. Dee learned the Kelley had a gift for contacting spirits by means of crystal gazing, and from 1582 to 1587 he used Kelley in arduous attempts to learn the wisdom of the angels.

(1) Kelley, for his part, was never sure he was communicating with angels and he constantly tried to with- draw from the experiments, but Dee convinced him to continue.

c. Eventually, the spirits (chiefly a guide named Enoch) communicated through Kelley a spiritual language.

(1) This Enochian language had an alphabet of 21 letters. The spirits supplied 19 invocations in this language and they translated these for Dee. They also dictated magical diagrams, primarily squares, some of them containing as many as 2,401 letters and instructions for their use.

2. Despite the wealth of knowledge it encompassed, Enochian magic fell into obscurity for many years.

a. It was revived by the Order of the Golden Dawn and is currently on the market titled "The Book of Enoch", and claims to present the complete Enochian system in a simplified and easy to use format.

D. Abramelin Magic

1. This branch of magic is based on an 18th century french manuscript titled "The Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage".

a. Abramelin set forth the semi-Gnostic doctrine that the world was created and is maintained by demons who work under orders from angels.

(1) A magician given the help of a Guardian Angel, could learn to control the demons for his own purposes.

(a) An adept depends heavily on word magic in the process and especially on palindromic magic squares.

I. THE GREAT BOOKS OF MAGIC

A. All great fairy tales mention the Magic Book of Spells, kept by the great magicians of times long ago.

1. These are records of incantations and gestures that have been tried out hundreds of times before and proved to be most effective.

2. Medieval magaicians collected any and all books on magic they could get their hands on.

a. There was an explosion of magical books in the Middle Ages.

(1) Most were imperfect copies of each other as they were translated from language to language and back again.

(a) These books were called Grimoires, perhaps an adulteration of the french word for Grammer, which was applied to books used to teach the basics of different subjects to the children.

b. Actually there were only about five books of magic which had any claim whatsoever of being authentic and most of the others were incomplete, and usually incorrect, copies of these basic five.

B. History of the Grimoires

1. The Testament of Solomon is the first great book of magic known to us.

a. It was published in Greek between 100-400 AD.

(1) Probably copied down by hand in the 2nd century.

(a) Speaking of the book as being published is of course strictly a convention since all books were hand copied until the invention of the printing press.

b. This book purports to be Solomon's autobiographical memoir of the building of the Temple in Jerusalem, which he accomplished with the slave labor of devils.

(1) With the help of a ring given to him by the angel Raphael, Solomon bound the vampire devil Ornais and forced him to work on the Temple.

(a) Solomon learned the names of the other devils from Ornias and bound them as well.

(2) By the 12th or 13th century, a list of 51 useful demons had crept into copies of the Testament of Solomon.

(a) These were demons who could be persuaded to bring material benefits to the sorcerer.

2. The Key of Solomon is perhaps the most famous of all the magical texts.

a. There are many versions in various languages.

(1) The bulk of these are in French and Latin, some dating from the 18th century.

(a) The Grimoire itself is believed to be much older. In the 1st century AD Josephus referred to a book of incantations for summoning evil spirits supposedly written by Solomon.

(b) A Greek version in the British Museum may date back to the 12th or 13th century.

b. The Key was prohibited as a dangerous work by the Inquisition in 1559, although like most books of magic, the local clergy were allowed to keep (and to use) copies as long as they did not step out of line and/or defy the authority of Rome.

c. The Key was concerned almost wholly with the practice of magic for personal gain.

(1) It contained no hierarchy of demons, but it did offer a system of magic based on the drawing of pentacles, which are five pointed stars inscribed with charms.

(a) These were grouped according to astrological signs.

(b) The pentacles for Saturn, for instance, were useful for causing earthquakes, inciting demons to fall upon victims, and in

general bringing about ruin, destruction and death.

3. The Lemegeton, or Lesser Key of Solomon, appeared mot long after the Key of Solomon.

a. It was divided into four parts.

(1) Goetia

(a) Wier, Agrippa's pupil was said to have drawn on the Goetia for his Grimoire called Psuedomonarchia Daemonium.

(2) Theurgia Goetia

(3) The Pauline Art

(4) The Almadel

(a) The Almadel was mentioned in writings dating back to the 1500's.

b. The Lemegeton included a complete hierarchy of 72 demons, whom the sorcerer could evoke for his benefit.

c. The origin and meaning of the Lemegeton is unknown.

4. The Constitution of Honorius first appeared in 1629.

a. It was attributed to Pope Honorius III (1216-1227) and its main contribution was to put a strongly Roman Catholic construction on magical evocation.

(1) Manuscript copies (corrupt ones) of the Constitution of Honorius made their way to Germany well before 1629. These had been translated from Latin to French leading some to believe that it had made its way into France before coming to Germany, where it was translated from French into German.

b. Elements of the Constitution mingled with certain other available texts and from these arose the strange mixture of practices that can properly be called Faustian magic.

5. The Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage is another puzzling text with no definite source.

a. As far as we know, it began as an 18th century French manuscript, dated 1458, and it claimed to have been translated from Hebrew.

(1) MacGregor Mathers, who founded the Order of the Golden Dawn, came across the text in the British Museum and translated it into English. Since then it has had a strong influence on the practice of magic.

C. Other Grimoires

1. As previously noted, there was an explosion of Grimoires in the Middle Ages and they continued to proliferate with the advent of the Rennaisance.

a. Most of these Grimoires were rip offs of the Key of Solomon or later additions by lesser known magicians to works attributed to well known magicians.

(1) Grimorum Verum, written in French and supposedly published in Memphis by Alibeck the Egyptian in 1517, although it probably dates from the 18th centuryand seems to be based on the Key of Solomon.

(2) Grand Grimoire, was written in French and dating from the 18th century.

(3) The Red Dragon, a version of the Grand Grimoire

(4) True Black Magic or The Secret of Secrets, a French version of the Key of Solomon published in 1750.

(5) The Arbatel of Magic, published in Latin at Basle, Switzerland in 1575.

(6) The Black Pullet, supposedly published in Egypt in 1740, it probably dates from the late 18th century.

(7) The Fourth Book, added to Agrippa's Occult Philosophy after his death, and rejected by his pupil Wier as a forgery.

(8) The Magical Elements of Heptameron

(a) Attributed to Peter of Abano, who died in 1316. It was probably written in the 16th century as a supplement to the Fourth Book.

LESSON 4A

I. THE TRAINING OF A MAGICIAN

A. How Ceremonial Magic Works

1. We have seen that magical texts always appeared in print many years after they were written.

a. By that time, the texts had become corrupted, secrets had been suppressed, and whole new doctrines had been grafted onto the older teachings.

2. The practice of magic is a highly individual matter.

a. A true adept works out his own methods of evocation after sifting through all the available material and adopting techniques that resonate with his own inner self.

(1) Magic is an inner discipline. The errors that crept into the magical texts were errors of form as opposed to errors of substance.

(a) The inner meaning is what gives the work its power. What matters is the magician's state of mind, which produces the psychic force he invests in the invocation.

3. Before one can practice magic he must attain a high level of development in the mental, psychic and physical planes.

a. In order to practice ceremonial magic it is necessary to strengthen and develop the physical and etheric.

(1) Become expert in the techniques of astral travel and psi.

(a) And master the symbols of the Universal Mind in all their forms.

4. Magicians are reputed to be able to make spirits appear and talk to them face to face, materialize balls of fire or watery globes and set them to work, penetrate people's minds, and travel to the farthest parts of the world as quickly as thought.

a. They area said to be able to do these things by mastering the use of the universal energy called ether.

(1) Some call the universal energy AKASHA which is a Sanskrit word meaning bright or shining.

(2) Ether is not matter, but it is the origin, or substratum, of all matter.

(a) It infuses the entire universe. The universe being considered to be nothing but ether in its various states of existence.

(3) Ether emanates directly from the Deity. At its purest, the point at which it is closest to the Deity, it is pure light.

(a) As it emanates outward in all directions it becomes more and more gross.

(b) The different levels of what we call the astral plane are levels of ether.

(c) What we call the material plane is the lowest, grossest form of ether.

5. Magicians use the Ptolemaic scheme of the universe as a map of the etheric levels.

a. In this scheme, the universe is made up of 10 astral spheres and four material spheres.

b. It is further grouped into the Higher Astral, Lower Astral, and the Material Planes.

(1) The Higher Astral Plane

(a) Primum Mobile (First Mover)

(b) Crystal firmament

(c) Fixed stars

(2) The Lower Astral Plane

(a) Saturn

(b) Jupiter

(c) Mars

(d) Sun

(e) Venus

(f) Mercury

(g) Moon

(3) The Material Plane

(a) Fire

(b) Air

(c) Water

(d) Earth

c. In describing the Material plane magician use the ancient division of four elements: earth, water, air and fire.

(1) Ether serves as the fifth element or (in Latin) the quinta essentia, or quintessence.

(a) Because ether (or akasha or quintessence) has no bounds of time or space, anyone who learns to use it will be able to penetrate all levels of the universe thoroughly and instantly.

(b) The magician who is adept in his craft can thus work equally well on the mental, astral, and material planes.

B. The Apprenticeship

1. It is possible to stumble across your hidden talents, but it is better to follow a set course of study in magic.

a. This provides guidance along the way and because you are following a path that has been trodden before, you will come across milestones that will help you gauge your progress.

b. The following information is derived from a 10-stage program of initiation based on the contemporary German magician Franz Bardon's book Initiation into Hermetics.

2. Before you begin you must give up the idea that you own your own thoughts.

a. Most people believe their thoughts are part of their minds, just as their hands are a part of their bodies.

(1) Your thoughts live freely in your mind, just as wild animals roam freely through a forest.

(a) Each mind is connected to the Universal Mind and thoughts, as well as thought-forms, swim through it occasionally surfacing in this mind and that.

(b) This concept must be mastered if you are to understand and master the process of magical evocation.

b. The spirits you will evoke inhabit your mind just as independently as your thoughts. They live in your mind because it is a part of the Universal Mind.

(1) For this reason if you evoke a spirit of the sphere Venus, it will not arrive from outer space but from within your own mind.

(a) The spirits originate in the mind but they are quite real. The spirits do appear and work on the material plane, but you must look within yourself for them.

(b) The point is that whatever you seek must be looked for within, for you only delude yourself when you look for the answers outside yourself.

3. Once you have grasped the material above fully, you can begin the ten stages of the initiation.

a. tThe exercises will prepare you menetally, psychically, and physically for the practice of magic.

(1) Mental- Now that you are awarea that your thoughts are like living beings, you must become more awaare of them. Meditation, perhaps coupled with yoga, is a good way of doing this.

END LESSON 4